

## NEWS OF THE DAY.

"To show the very age and body of the Times."

A tramp yesterday entered a house on the principal street of Thomaston, Me., and a young lady who was present becoming frightened, ran up stairs, followed by the daring scoundrel, who drew a pistol, and after threatening to shoot her if she made any outcry, gagged and bound her. He then proceeded to search the house, and after securing a gold watch and chain and some other valuables, left without being detected.

The citation commanding the officers of the Central Pacific Railroad Company to produce the defaulter and bigamist, Woodruff, before the Twelfth District Court, at San Francisco, was dismissed yesterday. It is stated that the railroad company in settling with Woodruff allowed him to retain sufficient to make him comfortable for life, and that he left on the China steamer on the 21st.

Owing to some informality in the surety bonds of W. O. Avery, late Chief Clerk of the Treasury, indicted in the United States District Court at St. Louis for complicity with the whiskey ring, they were rejected by the Court, and will be sent back to Washington for correction. Avery has entered into personal recognizance to appear from day to day.

That portion of the Texas and Pacific Railroad lying between Marshall and the boundary line dividing Texas from Louisiana, from Marshall to Brookston, Texas, has been accepted by the Government on the recommendation of Commissioner Isaac H. Sturgeon.

Dion Bouicault was arrested yesterday in New York, as he was about to sail for Europe, at the instance of Robert McWade, who has instituted suit against him for libel growing out of the "Shaugtraan" controversy. Bail was procured, and Mr. Bouicault departed on his voyage.

Philadelphian late night, J. Schidt, while drunk, cut his wife's throat with a cheese knife and then broke her arm with the handle of the knife. Her wounds are considered dangerous. He was arrested. He had just returned from Germany and has always borne a good character.

The St. Louis Globe Democrat says that some twelve families have been compelled to leave Williamson county, Illinois, within the past week by the outlaws who rule that county, and many others are arranging their affairs preparatory to leaving.

It is said that one of the murderers of the notorious Tom McGehee, who was assassinated at Hamilton, Ohio, sometime since, has been arrested at Laporte, Ind., and awaits the requisition of the Governor of Ohio.

John D. Lee, the leader of the Mountain Meadow massacre, is on his way from Beaver to Salt Lake, in charge of an United States marshal, for incarceration at Camp Douglas, until his next trial.

A tornado of extraordinary volume swept over Philadelphia yesterday, unroofing houses and doing other damage. No person was seriously injured.

The Mississippi continued to rise at Memphis yesterday. Several plantations below are already submerged, and as the river continues to rise much alarm is felt.

Advices received at the Bureau of Statistics from China show that twenty-four million pounds of tea were exported from Hankow during the first fortnight of the new season.

The bark Herman Becker, from Jamaica, has put into Key West with the captain and a portion of the crew sick with yellow fever. One death had occurred on board.

The State Street Savings Bank, of Chicago, has made an assignment for the benefit of its depositors. Its deposits are \$37,000, while its available assets are only about \$7,000.

Some of the officials of the Baltimore and Ohio and Pennsylvania roads were in consultation in Baltimore yesterday, in regard to what action should be adopted in view of the advance of the rates on Western bound freight on the New York Central and Erie roads, and it was decided to slightly raise the figures from Baltimore to Chicago, but to keep them below the new rates of the New York roads. It is stated that the utmost harmony now prevails between the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio companies.

## COMMERCIAL.

ALEXANDRIA MARKET, AUGUST 12.—Wheat is more active, and the market is firmer; offerings of 2900 bushels, with sales of white at 137 and 150 for good to choice, and red at 100 for inferior, 125, 135, 147, 140, 141, 143 and 145, later for prime. Corn is quiet and unchanged; offerings of 1370 bushels, with sales of mixed at 79 and 80, and yellow at 80. Oats less firm, and prices are off; sales at 55, with offerings of 258 bushels.

PORT OF ALEXANDRIA, AUGUST 12.

Sun rose..... 5 12 Moon sets..... 0 28

Sun sets..... 6 55 High water..... 0 04

## ARRIVED.

Steamer Express, Baltimore, to Broders & Co. She reports passing no coasters in the river, bound up, but that the river schooner Urbanna, with a cargo of wheat from St. Mary's county, consigned to Mr. Waters, of Georgetown, was ashore at Cobb Point, with a lighter alongside.

Schr J P H Langrell, Philadelphia, to W A Smoot.

Schr Southshore, Boston, to American Coal Company.

Schr B C Terry, Philadelphia, for Washington.

Schr John Middleton, Jr., Philadelphia, for Washington.

Schr N H Skinner, for Washington.

## SAILED.

Steamer Lady of the Lake, Norfolk, by F A Richmond.

Schr DeMorey Gray, Providence, by American Coal Co.

Schrs Wm Jones and Kate D Turner, from Georgetown.

## MEMORANDA.

Schr Twilight, hence, at New Haven 9th.

Schr Arago, hence, at Norfolk 10th.

Schr A B Fields, hence, at Richmond 11th.

Schr Addie Blandall, Boston, and J T Weaver, Providence, sailed from Delaware Breakwater 8th for this port.

Schr Ida Birdsell, for this port, sailed from New London to-day.

## CANAL COMMERCE.

Arrived—Bos Wm Morehead, to Wm A Smoot; J R Couzen, to Consolidation Coal Co; M D Core, R Bender, S S Howison, A J Akin, H O Clouston, J W Morris, J P Moore, S H Henry, H Delidell and Major E L Moore, to American Coal Co.

Departed—Tr Alpha, Boston, to American Flag, W B Lloyd, J H Sweeney, J R Cruzen, V L Sprigg, W C Hunter, M D Core, R Bender and W Morehead, for Cumberland.

## MEETINGS.

OFFICE VIRGINIA TELEGRAPH CO., Alexandria, Va., July 27, 1875.

There will be a meeting of the stockholders of this company, at their office, in this city, on TUESDAY, the 17th day of August, (proximo) at 12 o'clock m.

aug 3-1d ROBT BEVERLEY, Pres't.

WORKED DRESS FRINGES.

Received this day, per express, twenty pieces of Caterpillar Fringes, in all shades, at twenty-five cents per yard, at

aug 24 C. C. BERRY'S.

## Meeting of the Board of Aldermen.

A called meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held last night. Notwithstanding the inclement weather prevailing, all the members but two—both of whom were out of the city—were present. Three or four spectators only sat on the benches without the bar.

A communication of the Mayor, with reference to the establishment of a mineral bureau in this city, and the resolution providing for the same, adopted by the Common Council the previous night, having been read,

Dr. Johnson said the whole affair smacked largely of the ridiculous. If it was the desire of the Mayor to have a place for the exhibition of minerals why let him set up a case in his office, or in either of the chambers of the City Council, at a cost of \$5; but talking about mineral bureaus was puerile and chimerical and only excited laughter—a bureau with five or six specimens of iron and three or four of coal—the thing was absurd, and he couldn't give his approbation to any such nonsense; and why the Mayor should be bothering with such stuff he couldn't understand. It was but another one of the foolish schemes with which we have been so long deluding ourselves—was, like Micawber, waiting for something to turn up. Something like the iron furnace project of a year or so ago, when the man who would have been more benefited by such a furnace than any one else in the city, talked about some one outside of the city subscribing for a large share of the stock, but never said a word about taking any himself. The bureau, if established, would be vastly inferior to many private collections of minerals in the State.

Mr. Neale said that he saw nothing ridiculous in the resolution passed by the Common Council at its last meeting. In regard to the organization of a company for the purpose of establishing an iron furnace in Alexandria the member from the Third Ward was mistaken as to the reason that led to the abandonment of the scheme. One, beyond all doubt, could have been found suitable to have been used in the manufacture of iron, but what led to the relinquishment of the idea of forming a company was the unusual and long continued depression in the price of iron. It was thought upon consultation that until the effects of the panic were off and the iron interest revived it would be unwise and unsafe to start the new enterprise.

Had it been deemed prudent by the committee (of which the speaker was a member) to have organized the company, no trouble was anticipated in securing subscriptions for the requisite amount of stock needed to build the works and to put the company into successful operation. As to the resolution under consideration, it was eminently proper it should be passed by the Board of Aldermen. The purpose of the resolution was to provide a suitable room and apparatus where could be placed upon exhibition specimens of the various mineral deposits of Virginia. If the object of the resolution was ridiculous it was strange that the Common Council of the city of Lynchburg, composed of some of the oldest business men in the State, should have passed a resolution having the same end in view. Seeing the advantages that would accrue to their city they had instructed a correspondence to be opened with Mr. Barbour and Gen. Mahone, hoping that they might induce those gentlemen to favor the establishment of the bureau there. He trusted that the Common Council of Alexandria would not be less sagacious. Having the specimens upon exhibition here would have the effect of inducing the large number of persons who were seeking investments in mineral lands to visit us.

This visit would necessarily cause them to spend money, and the spending of the money would be of benefit to our community. The plan suggested by Dr. Johnson—that the specimens should be placed upon exhibition in the Mayor's office—was not practicable. The Mayor was a public officer; his office was generally filled with people, and gentlemen from a distance would be unwilling to subject themselves to the annoyance of examining and passing upon the value of specimens surrounded by a crowd talking upon entirely different subjects. Even supposing the Mayor's office to be entirely private, the size of the room would be inadequate for the proper exhibition of the specimens. A room should be provided with every convenience, where the specimens could be advantageously placed. The sum named in the resolution is not too much to carry out the object desired, and the resolution would therefore receive his support.

Dr. Johnson said he had long since learned to separate fancy from reality, but had no objection to free spun plans, provided they did not cost anything. He did not want to say that his chemical knowledge taught him, and that his working iron in Virginia will never pay. Coal will pay, but to talk of establishing iron works is all right, but it can't be done for seventy-five years. Still, if people are foolish enough to come here and put their money into such works, let them do so, but manufactured iron can be bought here three or four cents a pound cheaper than it can be made. The idea advanced by the gentleman from the 4th Ward, about competing with Lynchburg, was preposterous. If we have such a bureau we must have in charge of it a skillful and competent geologist and mineralogist, who will be able to analyze the specimens, and tell the difference between iron and the sulphuret of iron, and for such an one a liberal salary would have to be paid, as professional gentlemen didn't adopt the theory of the Common Council that good officers could be gotten for small salaries—a first-class engineer, for instance, at \$50 a year.

Mr. McKenzie said the thing that troubled him was the small amount (\$200) appropriated by the resolution. His idea of the bureau was that numerous large sized specimens would be sent to it from all parts of the State, and that all parties interested in developing the mineral resources of Virginia would be invited here to look at them, and that the collection would be sent to the Centennial exhibition at Philadelphia.

He was fearful when Mr. Britton was here last week of the rivalry of Richmond, which has so many more railroad connections, but thought Alexandria was the better place. It would require a large room for the exhibition of the minerals for he had on the way here now, from Western Virginia, a numerous lot of specimens, and he feared the cost of the room and of keeping it open. A person to take charge of it must be provided, but he didn't think there would be much trouble about that, for hardly had the notice of the proposed establishment appeared in the Gazette before there were many applicants for the position. He believed iron could be made in Virginia for \$48 per ton, but the great difficulty was the want of capital in the State to successfully compete with more Northern manufacturing. The mere transportation of the ores, however, would be a valuable consideration.

Mr. Janney said all that was wanted was a large room, which he understood could be fitted up for the desired purpose for \$150—the railroad company would supply the man to attend to it.

The vote on concurring with the action of the Common Council was then taken, and resulted affirmatively, Dr. Johnson being the only no.

A resolution adopted by the Common Council, directing the Superintendent of Police to improve Cameron street, between Washington and Columbus, having been read,

Dr. Johnson said he was tired of having such work done by the Superintendent of Police. Work done by him generally costs twice as much as if put out by contract—it is proper method—and if this was done by him, instead of the property-owners being compelled to pay their share, it was probable that Council would have to pay the whole of the expense—Christ Church would certainly refuse to pay its share, and there is no law for making it pay.

It would be better to have the work done by contract; but if not that way, why let each property owner have his own work done in his own way—using stone, wood or brick, or no material at all, as he might choose, for Council would have no right to make him buy stone curb when wood would do as well. The manner in which such work has been done heretofore makes it almost the sole duty of one Committee on Streets or one Council to correct the mistakes and do over again the work of its predecessor. The Superintendent of Police knows nothing about grading or fixing lines, and the only thing that can be done with work done by incompetent men is to do it over again. If the improvement is to be made in the way indicated by the resolution, he forewarned Council that the money for it would come out of the city treasury. There is a vacant lot on the street—what sort of work would its owner choose to have done on it? Perhaps he would not be in a condition to pay 80 cents a foot for stone curbing. The work now proposed to be done could have been completed a year ago for \$12, and he, the speaker, had, at that time, introduced a resolution ordering it to be done. The resolution passed this Board but was laid on the table in the Common Council chamber, and to do it now would probably cost two hundred dollars. So we go, learning nothing by experience, but the community insists that the Superintendent of Police shall stop this extravagant way of spending money.

Mr. Dowdham hoped the action of the Common Council would be concurred in. He didn't think the work would cost two or three hundred dollars, nor did he think that the Superintendent of Police, nor the Committee on Streets would spend any more money than was absolutely required. The work ought certainly to be done, for people, who in these dull times, built houses certainly deserved to be encouraged.

Dr. Johnson said he did not object to the work, but wanted it done properly and permanently. The mere grading of the street was a small matter, but it would leave the street a mire, when, if put out by contract, Macadamized with the stone now on the lot, it would be a permanent improvement. Mr. Francis, under the resolution, would probably pave his side walk, but would the other property holders?

The vote was then taken and the action of the Common Council was concurred in.

A resolution authorizing the laying of a trunk on Princess street, at a cost not to exceed \$500, between Pitt and Royal, adopted by the Common Council, was next read.

Dr. Johnson said that, both his experience and education would compel him to object to any such plan. It would be going from bad to worse. It was but another sample of the way in which matters of the sort had been heretofore conducted—the blind leading the blind, and was merely an effort to cover up a blunder of the Committee on Streets committed a few years ago. If we want the services of a lawyer, doctor or shoemaker we go to persons who pursue those avocations. Why not then when we need the services of a surveyor go to one? All men who know anything know that fluids despise acute curves, and the idea of making an acute curve at Pitt street, and another one at Royal, for the conveyance of the large body of water that flowed down north Pitt street was absurd. The water would dam up at the intersection of Pitt and Princess, and shoot beyond the bulkhead of the trunk, and find its way to the river by another route—atmospheric pressure would make it do so. The only two ways for the water to be run off were to let the trunk be extended out Pitt street to the point at which the water has been running out for forty years, or to extend the cobbles to the middle, to the same point; \$500 would not do the work proposed by the resolution, but \$1,000 would pave north Pitt street and make it the safe conduit of all the water that ran down it. But, said he, do as you please, there is plenty of money in the treasury. The sum appropriated for street improvements will soon be frittered away. See what has been done on St. Asaph street. Better let things alone than half do them.

Mr. Moore said this matter of draining Princess street had been before Council for the last two years, and if something wasn't speedily done, all the houses on the street, between Pitt and Royal, would be washed away. In his opinion the Committee on Streets, who had prepared the resolution, had reported the best and the easiest way to answer the purpose. The water that ran out Pitt street would have to turn to reach the river, and it may as well turn at Princess street as further north, and he was satisfied the work proposed could be done for \$500.

Dr. Johnson said there was no use in insisting upon the right. Any man who had ever walked the street knew that to cut across was shorter than to go all the way around, and why 350 feet of trunk should be preferred to 150 when the latter would answer, he could not tell. He insisted that \$500 would not pay for the proposed oaken trunk—a pine trunk would cost \$1 a foot; but why use oak when pine would do as well if not better? All engineers know that pine, with a heart, would last longer in the ground than oak. It was no interest to him personally how the improvement was to be made, but he protested against the continuation of the blunders that have heretofore been made in the street improvements.

Mr. McKenzie said the gentleman seemed to imagine that contract work was the cure of all evils, but such was not the case, at least in the experience of the City Council. He, the speaker, was sorry this meeting had been called. He hoped and thought that when the summer recess was taken it was until October so that the drawing of money out of the treasury could be stopped for a while, at least. He wished the gentleman was a member of the Committee on Streets, but we don't gain anything by putting work out to contract, as a comparison of the work done in Fayette alley, and on Prince street will show. He did think, however, that Mr. Hughes, the chairman of the Committee on Streets, was too anxious to spend the city's money on the streets, and was extravagant in his expenditures.

Mr. Dowdham said he was a member of the Committee on Streets, but being out of the city, was not present when they prepared the resolution now under consideration. He would say that the trunk plan was a plan he would have favored, and if we had a thousand dollars to spare he would vote for putting north Pitt street, but we didn't have that sum, and something must be done with the street immediately if we want to avoid suits for damages. He had confidence in the committee, of which he was a member, and would support the plan adopted by them as the best that could be done under the circumstances.

Mr. McKenzie said he hoped the members of the committees would all attend the meetings of their respective committees, and not leave one or two men to prepare the reports. He had supposed that the proposed work was recommended by the whole committee.

Dr. Johnson said that twelve months ago he had introduced a resolution, which was adopted in this Board, providing for the proposed improvement. When it was sent to the Common Council, Mr. Eichberg, a member of that illustrious body, voted to lay it on the table, but now, because he is going to live on that street, he wants the work done immediately, and at public expense. Mr. McKenzie, too, with doubt in his mind about the correctness of the proposed plan, and having just said that the chairman of the Committee on Streets spends too much money, still is willing to adopt it. Why don't he stick and refuse to countenance any such scheme. He, the speaker, would protest against such policy, and the people would sustain him. He was grieved and mortified to see members governed by such selfish motives. And are such fellows going to make a catwalk

and tool of me? No sir. The work it is said must be done at once. Haste is the worst of taskmasters. Things done in haste are repented of in leisure. He was not willing to let the chairman of the Committee on Streets buy this lumber. Once before, three weeks previous to the making of a public contract, a member of the committee had made a private contract with a private lumber dealer for lumber to be charged for at an increased price. He made this charge and he could prove it. He never made charges that he couldn't prove. The work should be given out by contract to the mechanics of the city, all of whom should have a chance at it. With the city as prostrated as at present, it was shameful to be running it at this unnecessary and extravagant expense. He would not say now what he knew about a deficiency of from twenty-five to thirty thousand dollars that would occur in this year's revenue.

Mr. Dowdham said he was sorry to hear the gentleman talk so about members of the Council, and especially sorry to hear him impugn the motives of members of the committee of which he, the speaker, was a member, and which he felt assured were as pure as those which actuated their accuser.

Mr. Moore said that his experience with Council's contract work was that it cost about twice as much as similar work done by the Superintendent of Police, and was not done half as well. He recollected distinctly an instance in which contract work cost \$800, when a similar job done by the Superintendent of Police cost \$300. Dr. Johnson was a member of the Committee on Streets last year, and was then always willing to turn everything over to the Board of Public Works. If he did anything, it was that work on St. Asaph street.

Dr. Johnson said the gentleman had made that assertion before, and he, the speaker, had now nothing else to do but pronounce the statement false. He had nothing more to do with the present condition of St. Asaph street than the gentleman from the 1st Ward.

Mr. Neale said that as Mr. Dowdham had not been present at the meeting of the committee which had prepared the resolution, as Mr. Smoot, the other member of that committee, from this Board was absent, and as Dr. Johnson had examined the matter and was opposed to the plan recommended, he would move to lay the resolution over till the next meeting.

Mr. Moore said Mr. Smoot approved the plan, as did also Mr. Broders, the member from the other Board.

Mr. McKenzie seconded the motion to lay over, and it was carried.

Mr. Moore asked what had become of a petition of sundry residents of St. Asaph street for tearing up the track of the railroad on that street.

Dr. Johnson said it had been referred to the Corporation Attorney, who would examine and report upon it, as soon as his health—now feeble—would permit.

A resolution adopted by the Common Council, appropriating \$50 for the payment of a bill for paving the sidewalk at the intersection of King and Washington streets, being read.

Dr. Johnson said consistency was a jewel rarely found in men, and when sound was highly prized. The Common Council a short time ago must always know when money was paid whether the work for which it was due had been ordered by the Council. During that consecutive period many people on north Pitt street were unable to procure water unless they agreed to purchase their groceries from a man who had a pump in his yard. He, the speaker, in the emergency, had a well dug for their accommodation, they paying \$8 of the cost thereof. The bill for the remainder—and the work was done by contract—with accompanying vouchers, was sent to the Common Council, who laid it on the table on the pretence that the work had not been authorized. The work benefited many people; there was no doubt about the correctness of the bill and the saving of the \$8, which had been paid by those who used the water, and yet that bill was rejected, and this one, though no more authorized than that, paid without a dissenting voice. He was in favor of paying this bill because the mechanic who did the work ought to have the money for it, and he only showed the inconsistency of the Common Council to exhibit to the people how the city fathers treat their children.

The work, however, should have been done by contract and not given by Mr. Clifford to any one he likes. The law says the work must be given out that way, but Mr. Clifford don't obey the law.

Mr. McKenzie said he was sorry Council had not paid the bill referred to by the gentleman; it should have been paid, but it was thought the work had not been authorized. As to the present bill he did not think the Committee on Streets or the Superintendent of Police had any right to expend a larger sum than \$20 without the consent of Council, and he would repeat that the chairman of the Committee on Streets would ruin this town if he is not stopped in his course of excessive and extravagant expenditure.

The motion to non-concur was agreed to and the bill ordered to be paid.

The report of the City Treasurer was accepted without debate, and the Board then adjourned. Mr. McKenzie expressing the hope that there would be no more meetings till October.

A violent storm of rain and hail, accompanied by terrific thunder and lightning, passed over this vicinity last Friday evening. A tenant house on Gen. James H. Carson's place, near Newtown, occupied by Mr. Gruver, was struck by lightning. Mrs. Gruver was rendered unconscious by the shock, in which condition she remained for some hours, but was restored, and now appears to be as well as ever. Her daughter was also slightly shocked. Traces of the lightning are to be seen in four rooms, but the damages did not exceed five dollars. A horse belonging to Mr. Benjamin Smith, near Middletown, was killed in the pasture field. The lightning rod on Mr. C. W. Anderson's house on Potato Hill, protected it from damage, receiving a discharge and conducting it harmlessly to the earth. A fence on the run below Hollis's tannery was struck and somewhat damaged.—Winchester Times.

FISH, OYSTERS, &c.

CLAMS! OYSTERS! CRABS! WATERMELONS and CANTALOPE! Can now be found at the stand of R. PHILLIPS, on King street wharf.

I ask the patronage of the citizens of Alexandria. Being near the river, boats can get everything I offer for sale FRESH. Orders delivered to any part of the city.

aug 6-1w R. PHILLIPS.

W. H. SMITH & CO.,

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in ALL KINDS OF PRODUCE, FISH, OYSTERS AND GAME.

FAIRFAX ST. AND MARKET SPACE. Would inform their friends and the public that they have commenced the above business, and would be pleased to furnish them with anything in their line. Having made arrangements at their house, on Market space, by fitting up ICE BOXES, they are prepared to furnish the FINEST FISH and CLAMS from our ice boxes at all hours of the day and night, and all who favor us with their trade can depend on getting them fresh at all times.

W. H. SMITH & CO.

WANTS.

WANTED—BOARD in a nice, genteel family (religious family preferred) for three persons, grown-up father, wife and daughter. Address BOARDER, this office, or 15th and F sts., Washington, D. C.

aug 7-1w

PERSONAL.

INFORMATION IS WANTED OF THE HEIRS OF THOS. UTLEY, who went to Texas in or about the year 1835 or 1836, from Virginia.

aug 12-4



ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12.

## The Mineral Bureau.

Mr. J. Blodget Britton, whose plan for the establishment of a Bureau for the exhibition of minerals has been so favorably received throughout the State, has recently been on a visit to Richmond, where he was most kindly met, and his project looked upon with great favor. Gov. Kemper warmly endorses the idea, and, it is believed, would have extended substantial aid, it needed, out of some of the unappropriated funds in the Treasury, were it not for the fact that last winter the State Senate failed to pass the House bill, referred to by him in his letter to Mr. John S. Barbour. But State aid, fortunately, is not needed for the present, at least. The Governor believes it to be of vital importance to the people of the State that its untold mineral wealth should be developed as speedily as possible, and in anything that may be done towards the promotion of this end he will lend all the aid in his power to forward it.

Gen. Mahone, President of the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio Railroad Company, is also thoroughly alive to the importance of the project, and will favor it to the utmost of his ability. The following is his note to Mr. Britton:

ATLANTIC, MISS. AND OHIO RAILROAD CO.,

PETERSBURG, VA., Aug. 7, 1875.

Dear Sir: I have read with interest your communication to John S. Barbour, esq., dated 30th May, ult., and the plan you submit for the organization of a mineral bureau, whereby the mineral resources of this State are to be brought systematically before the world.

The plan strikes me as a good one for the purpose, and ought to concern every interest and citizen of the Commonwealth and especially our railways. This company will transport free of charge over its line any matter for this proposed bureau, and otherwise aid in the promotion of its objects. Yours respectfully,

WM. MAHONE, President.

To J. Blodget Britton, esq., Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Britton will again visit this city in a short time, when, aided by the city authorities and President Barbour, of the Virginia Midland road, who has taken such an active interest in the development of the mineral wealth of the State, he will endeavor to put the Bureau into practical operation at once.

It is desirable that Mr. Britton should at first conduct the Bureau in the way that may seem best to him, as all have perfect confidence in his ability and uprightness, and an assurance that he will try to make it a substantial benefit and credit to the State.

The railroad companies will have much to do in the solid establishment of the Bureau, the main object of which will be the collecting and making known to the public at large of full, thorough and reliable information of Virginia's resources, with a view to the erection of permanent home industries, and it will not only be a museum but a large cabinet, scientifically arranged, and be a practical worker in carrying out the purposes of its originators. It will be entirely free from the taint of speculation, and any idea that it is to be in any sense a private enterprise, for private gain, may be wholly discarded. Of course, the railroad companies in giving it their aid, pecuniarily and otherwise look for important gains in an increased carrying trade that must follow the success of the plan, but apart from this it is to be an institution for the benefit of all alike, and the rules for its government will be drawn especially to that end. Any and all important information looking to the consummation of the purpose had in view should be given to the public, and the press of the State will, doubtless, take pleasure in disseminating all such. We hope, in a very short time, to be able to chronicle what we are sure will be most agreeable intelligence to all, that the Bureau has been established in Alexandria.

Interest in the establishment of the proposed Bureau is not confined to within the State, as the following letter will show:

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 10, 1875.

Editor Alexandria Gazette:

Dear Sir: Having read in the Richmond Whig a letter from the Hon. J. S. Barbour to you on the subject of a "proposed exhibition of ores," I desire to say that, some years since, I was an assistant inspector of ordnance for the navy, and during that time I assisted to inspect almost all the guns and shot that was made for the navy. I visited Richmond, Boston, Cold Spring, New York, Pittsburg, Penn., and the iron mines on the Tennessee river. It is but just to say that, as far as my knowledge extends, the best iron in America is obtained from the mines in Rockbridge county, Virginia, and next to that is the Tennessee iron. I was also a member of a board of officers and others, some years ago, appointed to test the quality of coal from the different mines of this country. The board met at the Washington Navy Yard, and for the information of those whom it may concern, I must say that the best coal in the world for welding chain cables, and for forging large anchors, &c., is the soft coal of Virginia.

Respectfully, your ob't servant,

E. B. BOUTWELL, late of the Navy.

THE ACCIDENT AT THE BIG BEND TUNNEL.

The accident at the Big Bend Tunnel on the C. & O. R. R., near Hinton, by which Mr. John Roadcap, fireman, was killed and Mr. John Q. A. Wilkins, the engineer, had his arm broken in two places and was otherwise injured, was noticed in yesterday's Gazette. We learn from the Richmond papers that the cause of the accident was the breaking of a canal over the tunnel, by which the waters of a considerable stream were diverted to protect the tunnel.

This canal was repaired, and to guard against a recurrence of such breaks a force was put to work to strengthen and deepen it. But it seems that during the